

IV. LEGISLATION – POLICIES – RULES
A.1 2010 JFAC Presentation – Information Item

IDAHO COMMISSION FOR LIBRARIES
2010 JFAC PRESENTATION
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INTRODUCTION

Mister Chairman, Rep. Bell and members of the committee, on behalf of the Board of Library Commissioners, thank you for this opportunity to address our FY2011 budget request.

You have in front of you a copy of my PPT slides and two fliers:

- An overview of the Commission's major initiatives in 2009, and
- Highlights of the evaluation of 2009 Read to Me program.

I do not envy the challenge you have before you this year. My challenge today is to convey to you the results of the investments you have made in the Commission for Libraries.

Idaho libraries – academic, public, and school – are leapfrogging into the 21st century, striving to offer both the traditional services and the digital resources demanded by their respective publics at a time when their budgets are static or decreasing.

To take liberties with a famous quote of Mark Twain, the reports of the death of libraries have been greatly exaggerated.

I reported to you a year ago that the increased use of libraries in 2008 was in fact, a big spike in the existing 10-year growth of library use. 2009, as reported by Idaho's public libraries, saw even greater usage than 2008.

Commission staff members work with libraries to give them the tools they need to serve their communities in our rapidly changing world, helping librarians improve current levels of service and anticipate future demands.

In short, the Idaho Commission for Libraries lives its mission:

- To assist libraries to build their capacity to better serve their clientele.
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It is with your continued support that we are able to carry out our mission. I'll take a few minutes to review our budget request before I share with you how your investment in our agency impacts your community.

FY2011 Budget Request

Our budget by Decision Unit begins on page 5-73 in the Legislative Budget Book.

To give you some context, our FY2010 original general fund appropriation - \$3,426,000 - was 19.8% less than our original FY2009 appropriation.

- Our share of the 4% overall decrease to the FY2010 general fund is a 7.5% holdback
- The Governor recommends an additional 1% reduction to help balance the FY2010 budget.
- Further down the page you'll see that we're removing 4 FTP - 10% of our staff – from the books.

Building the FY2011 base is fairly straight forward.

- I will point out on page 5-74 under Annualizations, that the Governor does not recommend the 1-time decrease of \$291,900 in Operating for the LiLI databases.
- Due to the uncertainty of restoring the funding in FY2012, the Governor removed this 1-time reduction from his final FY2011 recommendation, with the expectation that those savings will revert to the general fund.

Further down the page is the Board of Library Commissioners' line item request of \$199,000 for the Read to Me program. We were asking to restore the amount we cut to help meet our FY2010 holdback. The request is not recommended by the Governor.

With the Governor's recommendation for FY2011 reductions totaling another \$328,200, or 9.6% of our original FY2010 appropriation, we have taken the following steps:

- Cut 1 LiLI database through the remaining contract period – June 2011.
- Kept a variety of operating costs at a minimum. This is manageable for now, but long-term these reductions will diminish our effectiveness and reduce our services.
- We are also holding 2 more positions vacant, including the Digital Repository librarian.
 - This was a hard decision, made when BSU hired away our incumbent.
 - The Digital Repository for state publications is fairly well established: since August 2008, it's grown to almost 15,000 publications. That's equivalent to 110 gigabytes, or the length of 11 football fields of books on a shelf.
 - With the librarian position vacant, we'll have a growing backlog of publications waiting for assignment of meta-tags to make each easily findable through a Google search.
 - And the contacts with state agencies may falter as those positions turn over or are eliminated, and experience tells us that will lead to a decline in participation.

AUDIT

In a more positive vein, I'm happy to report that the audit of our past 3 fiscal years, 2007 – 2009, resulted in no findings or recommendations, and no significant conditions or weaknesses were identified.

2009 RESULTS

Next I'd like to describe the results of our work over the past year, results that I believe show that your investment in the Commission for Libraries is very cost-effective and provides services that touch thousands of Idahoans every day.

1. Read to Me

Read to Me is the umbrella term for our early and family literacy programs.

The Commission's vision is that through RTM, all parents and caregivers nurture their children's early literacy skills, and all children develop as independent readers and become lifelong learners.

You appropriated \$335,500 to the Commission for FY2009 to enhance Read to Me programs through mini-grants to public libraries and several other program components, all of which incorporate partnerships between the library and other local organizations to create meaningful and sustained impact within their community.

Last summer the Commission received the results of a comprehensive evaluation of the 2009 RTM activities. Each program component is described in the evaluation highlights in front of you. Our records show that 30,529 children were reached through RTM programs in 84 public libraries.

Furthermore, as a by-product of the connections librarians made through their RTM activities, registration for 2009 Summer Reading programs jumped to 63,300 children, a record-breaking 38% increase over 2008.

To quote from the evaluation report:

- "The changes in parent behaviors in regard to children's early literacy are striking. Parents are reading more to their children and focusing on the six early literacy skills. Daycare providers, preschools, Head Start programs, and public school Title I programs have proven to be wonderful partners.
- "There is ample evidence . . . that the Read to Me programs . . . have significant legacy value for the participating libraries, their service areas, and the state of Idaho.
- "The librarians gain and retain important knowledge and capacity as a consequence of participation. Evidence strongly suggests that this knowledge and capacity will continue to have quite positive effects on early literacy development in Idaho . . . "

2. Wal-Mart Foundation

The success of the RTM program also led to an invitation from the Wal-Mart Foundation to apply for one-time funds to support "Strengthening Library Services for Youth in Idaho." The grant project was a collaborative effort among the Idaho Library Association, First Lady Lori Otter, the Idaho Community Foundation, and the Commission.

The funds were distributed by the Commission through a competitive grant process open to all Idaho public libraries. Response was overwhelming: 53 proposals requesting a total of \$308,000 were submitted. With \$98,000 in grant funds, we were able to award 14 of them.

Those projects are resulting in increased library use, new services for youth, and stronger community partnerships.

3. School Libraries

This past year we took a big step in working with school libraries to help develop their capacity to better serve their students, teachers, and administrators.

We commissioned an Idaho School Library Impact Study to identify how school libraries contribute to student success. The bottom line result from the 1,082 librarian, teacher, and administrator responses are that students are more likely to succeed/ excel/ thrive when librarians play active and collaborative roles with other teachers and with administrators.

Our next step is to draft a school library development plan that reflects the study's recommendations for how librarians, teachers, and administrators can create the environment where these activities take place.

We are also collaborating with the Department of Education and others to improve student achievement in several others ways, including

- Developing standards to promote critical thinking and problem solving skills using a variety of tools including web-based technology. The draft standards are scheduled to be presented at an upcoming meeting of the State Board of Education.

4. Partnerships

Over the past 18 months, the Commission has had numerous opportunities to partner with other agencies and organizations, in and out of state. Some of these partnerships have been serendipitous, others we've worked hard to cultivate. Most require investment of our staff time and expertise, with little or no outlay of cash. All result in training for Idaho librarians or start-up resources for new library services. And all demonstrate that we are a very nimble agency, well-positioned to seize opportunities that are consistent with our mission. Here are several examples.

- **Department of Labor**

Last spring our discussions with the Department of Labor resulted in training for Idaho public library staff on Labor's Career Information System and IdahoWorks, and free access for the public libraries to those resources through August 2010. This initiative lays the groundwork for future collaboration to extend Labor's reach in delivering other workforce support to Idaho citizens through local public libraries.

- **LILI Services**

Libraries Linking Idaho (LILI) continues to grow. With combined state, federal and local funding, LILI services provide all Idaho libraries, regardless of size, location, or budget, a suite of basic electronic information services for their clientele.

- LiLI services are now more critical than ever in supporting curriculum at all of our academic institutions and many of our public, charter, and home schools.
- The LiLI databases must be one of the most cost-effective services in the state – the cost of each Idaho library subscribing separately would total some \$11.5 million; with the statewide license we pay less than 5% of that.

- **BTOP**

The Commission is currently working with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to compete for federal broadband stimulus dollars available through the NTIA’s Broadband Technology Opportunity Program, or BTOP.

If our application is funded, the Commission will receive stimulus funds to:

- Upgrade Internet connectivity in those libraries that need it most,
- Provide more public access computers for any of our 141 public library facilities that can accommodate them,
- In partnership with four other state agencies, extend their reach of current programs and provide new online resources in support of K-14 students; un- and under-employed, and low skill workers; and adult learners through the public libraries, and
- Design and deliver E-rate training to public libraries to increase their capacity to sustain higher broadband connections.

And if our BTOP application is funded, the Gates Foundation will provide matching funds - giving Idaho public libraries an unprecedented opportunity to provide broadband connectivity that is affordable, sustainable, and scalable to meet future needs, and to improve access to high quality digital resources for their patrons.

Conclusion

Recently the director of a small public library told me: “Our library is being slammed with users. Be sure to tell the Legislature that we need all the help we can get.”

As Idaho libraries try to meet the growing demands of their communities, the Commission lives its mission by working with library staff throughout the state to build their capacity to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

If our funding remains level in FY2011, our priorities for the coming year include:

- Administering Read to Me and LiLI services,
 - Working to help school libraries meet the needs of 21st century students and teachers,
 - Developing the infrastructure for public libraries to offer affordable and scalable broadband access, and
 - Growing our partnerships to deliver online workforce development and adult learning services through public libraries.
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Thank you for your time and for your continued support of the Commission for Libraries and the Idaho library community.

What questions do you have for me?